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HAMILTON LIFE

The Weekly Student Publication of Hamilton College

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ROCHESTER RELAY RACE

The Hamilton Relay Team went down to defeat before the aggregation of the University of Rochester, at the Athletic Carnival held April 4th in the new Armory at Rochester. There was a reason for the defeat, and a pardonable reason. Our men have always run on banked tracks when running in doors. The track of the Armory, on the other hand, was a twelve-lap, flat track, a fact which made it very hard for an inexperienced runner to negotiate the turns. This was especially shown in the case of Roenke. His opponent ran close to the pole all the way around, while Roenke covered much more ground by running out at the curves. Babcock evidently learned something from watching Roenke, for he ran closer to the inner boundary, but his lack of practice at running on a flat floor made his time slower. Spencer had to run a fast man and one who was experienced, so that Smith had to make up more than half a lap to win. George Smith, of Rochester, Captain Smith's opponent, was too fast for him. He ran a heady and consistent race, succeeding in getting to the line ten yards ahead of Captain Smith, thus winning the race. Roenke and Babcock ran 220 yards each, Spencer, 440 yards, and Smith half a mile.

Smith's race in the relay was one of the features of the evening, arousing intense interest as the runners entered the last lap. His gain was consistent thruout the whole six laps. On a familiar track there is no doubt that, conditions being the same, Smith would have won the race, in spite of the one-half lap he was handicapped.

The men were all in good condition, shown by the quick recovery after the exertion of the relay. Smith entered in the mile handicap, was placed next to scratch man, passed six men and won second place in fast time.

WASHINGTON ALUMNI

The annual dinner of the Washington Association of Hamilton Alumni was held Wednesday evening, March 25th. The guest of honor was Prof. Richard U. Sherman. In his very able speech, among other things he predicted a record-breaking Freshman class next fall. In the absence, due to illness, of Representative James S. Sherman, President of the association, Director S. N. D. North of the Census Bureau acted as toastmaster.

Secretary of State, Root, '64, was the principal speaker. He praised Representative Sherman as an alumnus and as a statesman, his speech being colored thruout by great optimism for the future of Hamilton and of the nation at large.

Representative C. H. Law, C. S. Bundy, J. H. Shepherd, and Representative McLachlin were the other speakers. The officers elected were as follows: President, J. S. Sherman, '78; First Vice-President, M. E. Dayton, '64; second Vice-President, Hon. J. M. McLachlin, '78; Secretary, J. R. Baker, '93. The Executive Committee is composed of J. H. Cunningham, '66; J. P. Collins, '04; and E. O. Perry, '03.

THE "LIT." CRITIQUE

For a graduate, however lately separated from the College, to comment critically, yet sympathetically and helpfully, on an undergraduate publication is not an easy task, nor a thing that should be attempted without due deliberation—for which, in this case, there has been hardly time. So when asked by the editor of LIFE to review the current number of the "Lit." I was at first inclined to beg off, but on reading the "Lit." editorials I descried a subtilty of purpose—a hint which I could scarce ignore. I was to confess!

And so I do confess, and hereby assume my full share of blame for the unlidding of that critical Pandora's box—of which the "Lit." now so justly complains. No matter what excuse there may have been for it at the time, or how spicy reading or how easy and soul-satisfying for the critic, the old theory of criticism must pass—however difficult it may be to net these mordacious pests and put them under lock

So first, a word in general. The Alumni who are interested have watched with just satisfaction the growth and development of the "Lit." during the past two years—its improvement in almost every way and the new air of clean-cut and thorough workmanship that has so often been lacking in the past. The College is to be congratulated upon possessing a Literary Monthly that bears comparison with any similar publication among the colleges—and this due to the devotion to things literary and the courage of a small coterie of men. More needs to be said right here, but let this suffice.

Undergraduate literature is largely a struggle for form, for power of expression *per se*. It is seldom that we have anything important to say, anything that really needs telling. Mature and effective prose, too, is somewhat rare in college publications—for reasons which we have no time to discuss. By this I mean that reasonably good prose in fiction or essay seems to be rarer than reasonably good verse. Here I believe the "Lit." is doing excellent work, for to me its prose is very promising. Such a story as "The

Gordian Knot" shows a distinct story-telling gift;—a little wordily told, here and there, to be sure, but, as a whole, neatly and pointedly done, the detail well selected and suggestive, and with touches of dramatic power. Not convincing? Of course not—but then a psychological autopsy isn't easy. A tale that is told—and pretty well told. Dounce is building surely, and when he finds his material to work on, this growing power of expression will bring him to his own.

Far be it from me to criticise aught that Albert L. Blair, of '72, may take it into his head to charm us with. The pity is we couldn't hear him, and the more, that we youngsters know nothing of the life he spoke of, save as its afterglow warms the hearts and lights the faces of such pupils and lovers of "Old Greek." Prof. Fitch's "In the Eighties" is a welcome addition to that delightful and profitable series of reminiscences—delightful and profitable, like all good reminiscences, no less for the picture of foregone years than for the insight they give us into little suspected crannies of the writer's personality. Would that Dr. Fitch had confessed to annotations in that Agamemnon rather than aftermaths of recitations! And who doesn't revel in the thought of Stryker, '72, Brandt, '72, Fitch, '88, *et al* as callow, shallow gallery gods like the rest of us? It's fine. The "Lit." has had nothing better than these articles.

Rudd's "Eebsen" is amusing reading and displays a reportorial accuracy that would win its author his spurs on the New York Sun. Rudd insinuates a good many satirical opinions on such weighty matters as the contemporary drama, femininity, macaroons and millinery, and we don't stop to ask "Who says this happened?"—we say "How natural, I recognize this perfectly"—and it's a good part of literary art to put us in that frame of mind. It's very well done.

The book reviews are well written and very readable, but what forsooth do they tell us of the books reviewed? We hear more of Mr. Adams as the Patent Medicine Crusader than as author of "The Flying Death." Would it be "a breach of confidence to tell the story?" It might be to give us the *denouement* but not to set the scene or draw us the characters. How, otherwise, can you review? And so—to a slightly less degree—with the review of "The Ancient Law." Readable, but not reviewing. Woollcott has the critical faculty, the breadth of reading, the ability to express himself, but his "professional etiquette" is too finical here.

On such immature reflection as scant time has afforded me, I should rate the editorials above any other undergraduate effort in the issue—this assuming, of course, that we can compare editorial, story and verse. The provocation for the first, this is not the time or the place to discuss. I would, however, almost dare agree with that rhapsody that nominates beer not a beverage but a civilization and a culture. The editorials are incisive, unambiguous and thoroughly excellent.

The Hill Notes are well chosen and the Alumniana, as always, are the really valuable part of the "Lit." for the alumnus. Dr. Squires keeps in close touch with that great part of the College without the pale, and we like to see these things as he sees them.

And now to look the horse Pegasus in the mouth. Baum's verse is almost always pleasing. He is careful, modest, and as a rule simple. His choice of words is excellent and his ear for rhythm unusually fine. He is "conceitful"—to use the word—but seldom offends, and his work shows care and finish without the polish which so easily becomes mere surface dazzle. "The Crescent Moon" is not his best but is creditable.

Welch seems to lack this restraint and care. His work seems hasty, his conceits are too erratic. There should be a high sanity even in poetry. His verse is like the foam that follows the cork, irridescent and showy, but of little substance. His "Tears of the Morning" seems to me inferior, cheap, poor. "The Song of the Moon" is far better and has passages of lyric grace, though, as a whole, it is turgid. Welch's versification seldom stands the test of a first reading. His moralizing tendency is apt to spoil his lyric excellence. This is not to discredit Welch—far from it. His verse is fairly good, but it might gain so with application, care and thought.

Stryker, '06, has a very considerable mastery of verse form and unusual felicity of word and phrase. In fact, his natural gift is so apparent, his technique has become so good that we expect very considerable things of him. But he is subject to strange lapses and doesn't seem to devote thought to the content of his verse. For example, the sonnet "Homer"—and I rashly risk my classical reputation—seems to me absolutely devoid of Homeric atmosphere, flavor—or whatever the word is. It's Keats-Shelleyan. And do nymphs and dryads haunt a "lair"? If the exigencies of rhyme demand "lair" it's an extreme concession to make to "everywhere". Is "strange" a good epithet, in this connection, to apply to Homer?—to be sure he's Greek to most of us. And the picture of the poet out in the spring rains doesn't please,—but perhaps that's hypercritical. I consider the sonnet in detail largely because Stryker's work is the best and most mature of the lot. It is good, but there are obvious faults that seem to the prosaic mind to demand remedy.

The format of the magazine is excellent; the proofreading—to mention such little-big matters—quite unexceptionable, all of which betokens editorial skill and care. Personally, I confess to not liking the new cover—if it is permanent—as well as the old form, though, of its kind, it is tasteful and effective.

Even such a hasty and entirely inadequate review of the "Lit." has been a pleasure. I hope, moreover, it may be the small beginning of a series of criticisms by some of the alumni far more qualified than I am to speak *ex cathedra* on these matters.

A. M. Drummond, '06.
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Reportorial

C. ANIBAL, J. H. PARRY

WITH THIS ISSUE BEGINS an innovation in the shape of the '"Lit." Critique' by an Alumnus. LIFE intends to inaugurate this monthly Alumni criticism of her sister publication as a permanent feature. All the ex-undergraduate literary lights will be invited to resume the rusted pen: to give us a breath of Hamilton journalism as it was, incidentally criticising the "Lit." with an excellence that has been heretofore unapproached. The "Critique" this month is by Drummond, '06, Editor-in-Chief of LIFE, 1905-6. LIFE feels confident that it is an article which in itself is sufficient justification for this her latest departure.

THE UTICA PRESS published recently a column report of Prof. Sherman's speech at the Washington Alumni Dinner. The following are a few of the sentences found therein—they interest most vitally all Hamilton men: "It is too difficult for the high school boy to enter Hamilton. We must not let down the bars, but we should extend them so that the boys may climb over them in more than two places. Boys, and a plenty,are knocking at the gate. Some are turned away because they have not sufficient preparation. Others are well prepared but not in the lines that Hamilton insists on. To the first class no concession should be made. The entrance standard should not be impaired. But to the second we may well make the way possible. . . Hamilton would not be lowering her standards one inch if she should say to the boys of this class: 'We will value your chemistry and physics as much as they are worth.' Once in College we could bend their courses into the ways best suited to their development."

These, LIFE is confident, are sentiments that have a place in the convictions of most of Hamilton's graduates and undergraduates. Is it not possible to put the desire of the majority to a fair test?

FOR THE LAST TWO OR THREE years Class Spirit has seemed to wane. The Flag Row at the beginning of this term was the strongest possible illustration of this fact. The Sophomores hoisted their flag on the College pole and turned out to defend it. But where were the Freshmen? In their warm little beds, it is to be presumed, since except for trying to shoot the flag down with a shot-gun long before daylight, they made no effort whatever. Of course, the flag is only an excuse for a good healthy row, such as fosters Class Spirit, and it is fair to suppose that a class which lets such an opportunity pass, has very little energy or spirit to display.

Class Spirit makes for College Spirit, and we would courteously beg the Freshmen that they give us just a little more encouraging symptoms of being alive. Their record is none too brilliant. Are we too harsh?

BEQUEST FOR HAMILTON

Under the will of the late George A. Clark, of Utica, Hamilton will eventually come into possession of a trust fund of $5,000 to be devoted to a free scholarship to be known as the Byne Scholarship, a memorial to Mr. Clark's deceased sister, Mrs. Emily Clark Byne. The beneficiary of the scholarship is to be named by the pastor and session of the First Presbyterian Church of Utica. The bequest is subject to the life interest of another sister of Mr. Clark, Mrs. Mary Avery Clark McGarvey, of Utica, and will not become available until after her death.

LIFE BOARD MEETS

At the last meeting of the LIFE Board, Anibal and Parry, '11, were elected members. These men were chosen on the merit of their work in the Freshman LIFE competition. For this competition a new rule was established by which the material within the Local Column proper is to count twice that outside of said column. This was passed with an eye to placing a premium on the writing of Local Notes, and incidentally to preventing some abuses that had arisen under the old system. A. F. Osborn, '09, on retiring from the office of Local Editor, appointed Glover, '10, as his successor.

BASEBALL

Spring term having opened, the interest of the College now turns to baseball. The squad practised two weeks last term in the Gym, so that the men were somewhat classified as to respective abilities before this term. Outdoor practice is now held every afternoon, and those watching things closely see much improvement in the team.

Of last year's Varsity, Capt. Clark Cody, White, Smith and Judson, '08, Hatfield, Doherty, '09, and Judson, '10, remain, making a strong nucleus upon which to build this year's team. Of the Freshmen who show ability, Daly, Allen, Manion, Mitchell and Gardner are the most promising.

To take the positions separately is rather difficult at this early writing. Capt. Clark will certainly hold down second base in as good shape as could be desired. With Lloyd, '10, as substitute, this part of the in-field will be well covered. First base is as yet open, and in fact seems to be the weak spot, if there is one. Cody, '08, Sarles, '10,